

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BELGRA 01377 01 OF 02 211238Z
ACTION EUR-12

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O 210922Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5298

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BELGRADE 1377

FOR SCY OF STATE AND SECY CHRISTOPHER AND EUR/RPM ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE

SUBJECT: PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS AT BELGRADE

1. THIS IS A FURTHER PERSONAL ASSESSMENT ON MY PART OF THE DEVELOPMENTS HERE AT BELGRADE
2. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED THE NATO CAUCUS AGREED LAST FRIDAY ON THE FINAL TEXT OF A FINAL DOCUMENT TO BE TABLED TOMORROW AT PLENARY.
3. IN ALL CANDOR I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED A SOMEWHAT STRONGER VERSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SECTION OF THE TEXT AND OFFERED SPECIFIC LANGUAGE TO MAKE IT EVIDENT THAT THE WESTERN TEXT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA WAS UNMISTAKABLY STRONGER THAN THE FRENCH DRAFT. THE LANGUAGE I PROPOSED WAS NOT EXTREME BUT WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED THIS OBJECTIVE.
4. OUR NATO ALLIES WERE UNWILLING TO ACCEPT MY SUGGESTED LANGUAGE AND IN LIGHT OF THIS I ACQUIESCED IN THE COMMON DRAFT, IT IS SOMEWHAT BUT NOT A GREAT DEAL STRONGER THAN THE FRENCH DRAFT IN DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS. IN OTHER ASPECTS IT IS MORE AFFIRMATIVE THAN THE FRENCH PROPOSAL.
5. ON SATURDAY AT MY INVITATION SOVIET AMBASSADOR VORONTSOV HAD A PRIVATE BREAKFAST WITH ME AT THE GUEST HOUSE I AM OCCUPYING.

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AT THIS BREAKFAST, I SUGGESTED A SMALL NEGOTIATING GROUP CONSISTING OF TWO FROM THE EAST, TWO FROM THE WEST AND TWO FROM THE NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES TO NEGOTIATE OVER THE WEEK-END IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHETHER A COMPROMISE TEXT OF A CONCLUDING DOCUMENT COULD BE AGREED UPON.

6. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR AGREED TO MY PROPOSAL ON CONDITION THAT

I PERSONALLY PARTICIPATED IN THIS NEGOTIATION. HE STATED HE ALSO WOULD PERSONALLY JOIN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AND WOULD BE JOINED BY AMBASSADOR PETRAN OF HUNGARY FOR THE EAST. I TOLD HIM THAT MY PROPOSAL WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY OUR ALLIES AND BY THE NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED GROUPS.

7. FOLLOWING THIS BREAKFAST I COMMUNICATED WITH AMBASSADOR MELLBIN, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NINE AT BELGRADE AND HE UNDERTOOK TO OBTAIN APPROVAL OF BOTH THE NINE AND OTHER NATO ALLIES AND OF THE NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED DELEGATIONS TO THIS PROPOSAL. I WAS ADVISED BY AMBASSADOR MELLBIN DURING THE COURSE OF SATURDAY MORNING THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL GROUPS AND THAT THE NATO GROUP AGREED THAT I AND AMBASSADOR MELLBIN SHOULD REPRESENT THE NATO GROUP AND THAT THE NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES HAD DESIGNATED AMBASSADOR PESIC OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE HEAD OF THE SWISS DELEGATION TO REPRESENT THEM.

8. IT WAS FURTHER AGREED THAT WE WOULD MEET AT 10 A.M. SUNDAY MORNING AT THE DIPLOMATIC CLUB IN BELGRADE FOR THESE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS WAS AGREEABLE TO THE SOVIETS.

9. ON SATURDAY EVENING, I RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE YUGOSLAV DELEGATION ADVISING ME THAT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE TO MEET AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED UPON ON SUNDAY MORNING BECAUSE OF THE NECESSITY TO OBTAIN APPROVAL BY HIGHER AUTHORITY.

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10. ON MONDAY MORNING I WAS ADVISED BY AMBASSADOR MELLBIN THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT THE YUGOSLAV DELEGATION HAD MET ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON WITH THE SOVIET DELEGATION TO DISCUSS MATTERS WHICH YUGOSLAVIA FELT TO BE ESSENTIAL TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT BUT THAT THE MEETING HAD RESULTED IN DISAGREEMENT

11. SOVIET AMBASSADOR VORONTSOV ALSO ADVISED ME ON MONDAY MORNING THAT HE WAS STILL ANXIOUS FOR A MEETING OF THE SIX MAN NEGOTIATING GROUP TO MEET PROMPTLY BUT THAT THE YUGOSLAVS WERE UNWILLING TO DO SO AT THE PRESENT TIME. HE ADDED THAT PERHAPS THEY MIGHT RE-CONSIDER THEIR POSITION ON WEDNESDAY.

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12. MY ANALYSIS OF THIS RATHER BIZARRE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IS THAT THE YUGOSLAVS ARE AWAITING A REPLY TO THE COMMUNICATION SENT BY TITO TO PRESIDENT BREZHNEV IN THE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT TITO'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION WOULD PERSUADE PRESIDENT BREZHNEV TO ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS TO HIS DELEGATION IN BELGRADE TO BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH RESPECT TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THAN THEY HAVE BEEN T DATE. I PERSONALLY DOUBT THAT THE ANSWER FROM PRESIDENT BREZHNEV TO MARSHALL TITO WILL BE HELPFUL.

13. IT IS PASSING STRANGE WHY THE YUGOSLAVIANS SHOULD HAVE ENGAGED IN PRIVATE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS AFTER HAVING AGREED ON THE PROCEDURE OF THE SIX MAN NEGOTIATING TEAM. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THEIR DESIRE FOR A SUBSTANTIVE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN RE-ENFORCED BY THE PRESENCE OF WESTERN AND NEUTRAL PARTICIPANTS.

14. AT THE NATO CAUCUS THIS MORNING DESPITE OUR AGREEMENT ON FRIDAY TO TABLE THE WESTERN DRAFT ON TUESDAY SEVERAL DELEGATIONS, NOTABLY WEST GERMANY, BELGIUM, CANADA AND NORWAY, STATED THAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO DELAY TABLING THE WESTERN DRAFT UNTIL THE FRENCH DELEGATE REPORTED ON BREZHNEV'S REPLY TO PRESIDENT GISCARD. I SUGGESTED THAT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NATO CAUCUS BE HELD FOLLOWING THE ADJOURNMENT OF THIS AFTERNOON'S PLENARY TO RECEIVE THIS REPORT. THE SAME DELEGATIONS, HOWEVER, STATED THAT IN ALL PROBABILITY THEY WOULD WANT TO COMMUNICATE THE CONTENTS OF BREZHNEV'S REPLY TO GISCARD TO THEIR CAPITALS FOR EVALUATION.

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15. IT THUS APPEARS THAT THE WESTERN DRAFT WILL NOT BE TABLED ON TUESDAY BUT AT THE EARLIEST ON WEDNESDAY.

16. I POINTED OUT THAT WITH EACH PASSING DAY THE CREDIBILITY OF THE WESTERN DRAFT AS A NEGOTIATING DOCUMENT WAS DIMINISHING BUT IN LIGHT OF THE VIEWS OF OUR ALLIES IT NOW APPEARS THAT THIS DELAY WILL OCCUR WITH THE ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES. FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THIS MORNING'S NATO CAUCUS I WAS ADVISED BY AMBASSADOR GRAEFFE, THE

HEAD OF THE BELGIUM DELEGATION, AND AMBASSADOR HEISBOURG OF LUXEMBOURG THAT IN LIGHT OF THE FILING OF THE FRENCH PROPOSAL THEIR GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CO-SPONSOR THE WESTERN DRAFT.

17. I AM OF THE VIEW THAT OTHER WESTERN DELEGATIONS WILL LIKEWISE NOT JOIN AS CO-SPONSORS ALTHOUGH AS OF NOW THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, GREAT BRITAIN AND DENMARK HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY WILL ADHERE TO THEIR AGREEMENT WITH ME TO JOIN AS CO-SPONSORS.

18. IT IS EVIDENT FROM THE FOREGOING THAT DESPITE MY EFFORTS TO PRESERVE ALLIED UNITY BY AGREEING NOT TO TABLE OUR ORIGINAL STRONG DRAFT AND FURTHER BY AGREEING TO THE MODIFIED AND WEAKER WESTERN DRAFT -- AN AGREEMENT GREETED BY APPLAUSE WHEN I STATED IT LAST FRIDAY -- THERE WILL BE AN OBVIOUS DIVISION IN THE NATO RANKS RESULTING FROM THE FILING OF THE FRENCH DRAFT. I FURTHER DO NOT CREDIT VERY MUCH THE POSITION TAKEN AT THE NATO CAUCUS THAT DELAY IN FILING TOMORROW IS NECESSARY BECAUSE BREZHNEV'S REPLY TO GISCARD WOULD BE CONSIDERED AND EVALUATED. IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH VIRTUALLY ALL NATO DELEGATES NO ONE BELIEVES THAT

THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE ON THE BASIS OF THE FRENCH DRAFT. I AM INCLINED TO THE VIEW THAT IT MAY WELL BE THAT IN THE CRUNCH WE WILL HAVE VERY FEW CO-SPONSORS OF THE WESTERN DRAFT DESPITE OUR CONCESSIONS. THE DEFECTIONS MAY WELL BE DUE TO SOVIET
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PRESSURE.

19. UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO THE CONTRARY I PROPOSE TO PROCEED WITH THE FILING OF THE WESTERN DRAFT ON WEDNESDAY OR THURSDAY AT THE LATEST WITH SUCH CO-SPONSORS AS I MAY BE ABLE TO MUSTER.
GOLDBERG

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